

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification, page 4, line 30, after "microprocessor", -- having a memory for storing instructions -- has been inserted.

In claim 17, line 1, "15" has been changed to -- 16 --.

3. The Drawings filed on 04/16/2004 are accepted.

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record does not teach or fairly suggest a method and apparatus for expanding the capacity of a fixed digital field for a model train control system by providing a unique number field for a unique number calculated from the bits in said digital field; calculating a first unique number from said digital field according to a first algorithm; determining if said first unique number is present in said unique number field; assigning a first meaning to a particular combination of bits in said digital field if said first unique number is present; if said first unique number is not present, calculating a second unique number according to a second

algorithm; determining if said second unique number is present in said unique number field; and assigning a second meaning to said particular combination of bits in said digital field if said second unique number is present as claimed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chuong D. Ngo whose telephone number is (571) 272-3731. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lewis, Jr. A. Bullock can be reached on (571) 272-3759. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Application/Control Number: 10/705,216
Art Unit: 2193

Page 4

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09/25/2008